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ABSTRACT

A study examined the use of e-mail between the students in an introductory public relations class and their instructor. E-mail use was parallel to the use of face-to-face communication, with students reporting that they used office time and e-mail primarily to ask questions about quizzes, tests, and assignments. Older students and students further along in school were less likely to use e-mail to contact their parents but reported greater enjoyment of and learning from e-mail contact with the instructor. (Contains 20 references and 5 tables of data; appendixes contain an e-mail correspondence log and verbatim selected answers written in the space provided under the survey's "other" option.) (Author/RS)

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Students' Use of E-Mail in an Undergraduate Public Relations Course

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Students' Use of E-Mail in an Undergraduate Public Relations Course

The study examined the use of e-mail between the students in an introductory public relations class and their instructor. E-mail use was parallel to the use of face-to-face communication, with students reporting that they used office time and e-mail primarily to ask questions about quizzes, tests and assignments. Older students and students further along in school were less likely to use e-mail to contact their parents but reported greater enjoyment of and learning from e-mail contact with the instructor.

Students' Use of E-Mail in an Undergraduate Public Relations Course

Electronic mail has become a part of the landscape in school, the workplace and personal correspondence. A survey of college computer services reported in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* found that one in four college courses use electronic mail (e-mail) (Deloughry, 1996). An article in *Yahoo! Internet Life* (November 1998) reported a steady increase in e-mail use, from 36 million a day in 1996 to 177 million expected messages in 1998 and estimated half a billion e-mail messages a day by 2002. E-mail is used by 7 million college students (*Change*, 1998). A remake of the 1940 romantic comedy "The Shop Around the Corner," with Jimmy Stewart, where pen pals fall in love, is remade in 1998 as "You've Got Mail," starring Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan, who fall in love through e-mail correspondence.

This study contributes to the growing research on e-mail use in the academic setting. This study explores why students in a large introductory public relations class use e-mail or do not use e-mail to contact the instructor.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Articles on e-mail use in education date back well over ten years (Dreher, 1984; Hiltz, 1986). Furthermore, widespread e-mail and Web access is now clearly prevalent in colleges of journalism and mass communication. Arant (1996) surveyed 133 colleges of journalism and communications and found that professors in 96% of the schools had access to e-mail and the Internet, while 90% of schools surveyed reported that their students had access to these online resources as well. World Wide Web access was slightly lower, with 87% providing access to faculty and 80% providing access to students. Arant's study also found that 88% of the schools in the sample said their professors used online teaching resources and 72% reported their professors used e-mail to communicate with students.

Williams, Strover & Grant (1994) suggest applying the concept of "critical mass" to understand the adoption of interactive media technologies. They cite Markus (1987) in examining the adoption of e-mail and describing the "all or nothing" proposition where "If critical mass is achieved, all individuals in the community will eventually adopt the technology. But if the critical mass is not achieved, usage will drop because the lack of reciprocity, and eventually no one will use the technology" (1994, p. 468). Looking at Arant's data, it seems safe to assume that e-mail and Web use are closer to the "all" end of the spectrum than the "nothing" end in terms of adoption of these specific technologies in colleges of journalism and communications. The question then becomes one of why students and faculty are using e-mail and the Web rather than if and when they will adopt the technologies.

Daft, Lengel, Trevino and others have proposed information richness theory as an approach to understanding individual media choices for various tasks (e.g., Daft & Lengel, 1984; Trevino, Lengel & Daft, 1987; Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987). Information richness theory suggests that individuals select media based on the equivocality of the task at hand. That is, they choose "richer" media for more complex tasks. According to this body of theory, media range from rich to lean based on (1) feedback capability, (2) number of cues utilized, (3) personal focus of source and (4) language variety (Daft et al., 1987). Irani and Kelleher (1997) reviewed the research on information richness and found that e-mail was generally perceived to be less rich than face-to-face and telephone communication, but richer than written letters, memos, unaddressed documents and numeric documents (i.e., computer printouts of numerical data). Irani and Kelleher asked students in an introductory mass communication course (at the same course level and in the same college as the students in the present study) to rate several media on richness by expressing their agreement with four statements developed by D'Ambra and Rice (1994) to capture the four aspects of richness discussed above. Although they did not have students rate e-mail as an option, they did add Web sites to the list of media options and found that Web sites, like e-mail in previous studies, were perceived as less rich than face-to-face and telephone communication, but richer than a textual pamphlet.

Unambiguous communication tasks with well-understood procedures to guide information seeking are considered low in Equivocality. Examples from organizational behavior literature include "you want to schedule a meeting for two weeks from today" and "to give your immediate subordinate a set of five cost figures that he requested last week" (D'Ambra and Rice, 1994, p. 232; Daft et al. 1987, p. 360). In highly equivocal tasks, however, the answer or resolution one is seeking is not so clear. In fact, the question may not even be clear since the task is ambiguous. Examples tested include "you need clarification from a superior on a crucial issue affecting your zone/branch" and to get an explanation from a peer in another department of a complicated technical matter in which you have little formal training or experience" (D'Ambra and Rice, 1994, p. 232; Daft et al., 1987, p. 360).

Research in this area suggests that individuals, when confronted with a more ambiguous or equivocal communication task, will choose a richer medium. Given this body of literature, the present study seeks to explore the reasons why students choose to use media such as e-mail and the World Wide Web, which are relatively mid-range in perceived richness, to contact their instructor or seek additional information about their course.

Elasmar and Carter (1996) raised several relevant questions regarding variables related to e-mail use among freshman communication students including access, gender, and likelihood of using e-mail to communicate with various communication partners. They cited research suggesting that gender differences may exist when it comes to using computers for communication. For example, Krendl, Broihier and Fleetwood (1989) suggested that female middle-school and high school students were less interested in computers and less confident in their computer skills even "when they have as much experience with the technology as boys" (p. 85). Although this loose cohort has since reached college age, Elasmar and Carter found no significant difference in gender "in terms of E-mail traffic" in their study of college freshmen (1996, p. 50).

Elasmar and Carter did find, however, that individuals are more likely to use e-mail to communicate in an informal way with friends and family instead of formal communication with professors and co-workers," suggesting that students are more likely to use e-mail for fun or

enjoyment than curricular learning (1996, p. 50). They also found that 86% of their all-freshman sample owned or used computers while 51% of them reported having used e-mail. The present study follows up on the gender question as well as questions of access, e-mail learning, e-mail enjoyment and likelihood of using e-mail to communicate with various communication partners.

Many claims have been made about the merits and possibilities of e-mail in education. Tao and Reinking reviewed research on e-mail in education, and among their conclusions were the ideas that "E-mail communications tend to bring out traditionally silent voices in a tradit onal classroom" and that "E-mail communications are motivating and therefore increase the interactions between students and instructors" (1996, p. 8). This finding is based partly on the work of D'Souza, who asked "What impact will E-mail have on the instructional process?" (1991, p. 107). She experimented with e-mail in a business information systems class and found that students using e-mail scored higher on course exams than students in a control group that didn't use e-mail. She also reported that "E-mail appeared to help the shy or more passive students overcome fears or inhibitions they might of had about communicating with the instructor and classmates" (1991, p. 109).

Golden, Beauclair and Sussman (1992) studied factors affecting e-mail use and found that individual perceptions of a medium's usefulness affect media choice. Echoing information richness theory, they also concluded that e-mail systems are perceived as less rich than face-to-face communication since e-mail is "void of the nonverbal cues and nuances conveyed in face-to-face communication" (1992, p. 307). Golden et al. point out, however, that a weakness of their study is the reliance on self-report data only.

McCormick and McCormick (1992) collected both self-report data from undergraduates in a computer science course and observational data from the school's e-mail system and found that most undergraduate e-mail did not address work-related concerns, that e-mail content was related to periods within the academic calendar, and that self-reported e-mail use varied minimally as a function of gender and moderately as a function of GPA.

This study uses a combination of methods to address some of the key questions raised in the literaure:

- When both e-mail and face-to-face contact are available and voluntary, why do (or why don't) students choose to contact the instructor via electronic mail?
- Who are students most likely to choose as potential e-mail communication partners?
- Do students feel they learn from and/or enjoy contact with the instructor via e-mail?
- Does gender affect the answers to the above questions?
- Does age or year in school affect the answers to the above questions?

METHODOLOGY

One hundred and forty-two students (72 female, 70 male) in attendance at an exam review for Principles of Public Relations (PUR 3000) voluntarily completed a survey at the end of the 1997 fall semester. Registrar records indicated that 249 students were registered for the course. The survey data presented in this paper represent only responses from students in attendance on that day. The survey included a variety of types of questions described below. Although the survey measured class participation and reactions to various in-class activities, this paper focuses on student use of, and reaction to, electronic communication including e-mail and the World Wide Web.

E-mail correspondence log: For additional insight on e-mail use, all e-mail correspondence between the instructor and students enrolled in Principles of Public Relations in the fall semester was saved, recorded and summarized. (See Appendix A.)

SURVEY RESULTS

Demographics

The average age of students in this class was 21.1 years. Students ranged in age from 18 to 36. Three students (2.1%) classified themselves as first-year students, 25 (17.6%) as second-

year, 63 (44.4%) as third-year, 48 (33.8%) as fourth-year and three (2.1%) as post-baccalaureate or graduate. Public relations was the dominant major with 32 students (22.2%) followed by business with 19 (13.2%), exercise/sport sciences with 17 (11.8%), advertising with 16 (11.1%) and a host of other majors with less than ten students each. Other informal inquiries of the class indicated that some of the students were undecided on a major and considering public relations while others had declared public relations their minor. Current GPAs reported ranged from 2.25 to 4.0 with a mean of 3.12. When asked to report their expected grade in the course, no student responded with less than a C, while 79.5% expected a B or better and 16.9% expected an A.

E-mail use

Students were asked to gauge their agreement (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) with two e-mail items: "I enjoyed contact with the instructor via e-mail," and "Contact with the instructor via e-mail helped me learn." The mean for the e-mail enjoyment item was 4.3 (SD = 1.5), and the mean for the e-mail learning item was 4.0 (SD = 1.4).

Students also were asked to rate the likelihood of e-mail contact with various communication partners (1 = not at all likely, 5 = very likely, based on Elasmar and Carter's 1996 study). (See Table 1.)

Table 1

Communication Partner	*Mean*	*SD*
Friends elsewhere	4.4	0.9
Friends at UF	3.9	1.3
Club/Organization members	3.7	1.3
Parents	3.3	1.5
Professors	3.3	1.2
Work colleagues	3.2	1.3
Other academic contacts	3.2	1.4

Students then were asked, "If you have used e-mail to contact the instructor, what was the purpose of the contact?" and then asked to check all of the items listed in Table 2

that applied. Thirty-three students reported at least one reason for contacting the instructor via e-mail.

Table 2

If you have used e-mail to contact the instructor, what was the purpose of the contact?	*Total number of responses to item*	*Percent of total respondents*	*Percent of those 33 who reported any reason for e-mail contact*
To ask a question about a quiz or test.	20	14.1%	60.6%
To ask a question about an assignment.	15	10.6%	45.5%
To ask a question to clarify an issue for class.	10	7.0%	30.3%
To share something I found that I thought the instructor might be interested in.	4	2.8%	12.1%
To express my opinion about an issue in class that I didn't get a chance to say in class.	3	2.1%	9.1%
To express my opinion about an issue in class that I didn't want to express in front of the class.	2	1.4%	6.1%
Other (see Appendix B).	6	4.2%	18.2%

Students also were asked, "If you did not e-mail the instructor, why not?" and asked to check all the items that applied. One hundred and fifteen offered at least one reason for not contacting the instructor. (See Table 3.)

Table 3

If you did not e-mail the instructor, why not?	*Total number of responses to item*	*Percent of total respondents*	*Percent of those 115 who reported any reason for no e-mail contact*
I didn't have a reason to.	94	66.2%	81.7%
I came to see him during office hours instead because I prefer face-to-face communication.	30	21.1%	26.1%
I don't have access to e-mail.	13	9.2%	11.3%
Other (see Appendix B).	3	2.1%	2.6%

Face to face discussion

In order to compare face-to-face contact to e-mail contact, a similar series of questions was asked regarding meeting with the instructor in person during office hours. The first set of questions asked, "If you came to see the instructor during office hours, what was the purpose of the contact?" (See Table 4.)

Table 4

If you came to see the instructor during office hours, what was the purpose of the contact?	*Total number of responses to item*	*Percent of total respondents*	*Percent of those 50 who reported any reason for e-mail contact*
To ask a question about a quiz or test.	40	28.2%	80.0%
To ask a question about an assignment.	14	9.9%	28.0%
To ask a question to clarify an issue for class.	12	8.5%	24.0%
To share something I found that I thought the instructor might be interested in.	4	2.8%	8.0%
To express my opinion about an issue in class that I didn't get a chance to say in class.	3	2.1%	6.0%
To express my opinion about an is. in class that I didn't want to express in front of the class.	1	0.7%	2.0%
Other (see Appendix B).	14	9.9%	28%

Students were also asked why they did not visit the instructor during office hours, and 92 offered at least one reason. (See Table 5.)

Table 5

If you didn't come to see the instructor during office hours, why not?	*Total number of responses to item*	*Percent of total respondents*	*Percent of those 92 who reported any reason for no e-mail contact*
I didn't have a reason to.	82	57.7%	89.1%
I e-mailed instead because I prefer e-mail communication.	7	4.9%	7.6%
I e-mailed because the instructor's office hours didn't fit with my schedule.	4	2.8%	4.3%
Other (see Appendix B).	4	2.8%	4.3%

Gender

Total survey respondents consisted of 51% (n = 72) females and 49% (n = 70) males. A two-tailed T-test was performed to compare means on the Likert-type e-mail and Web items. Only one item, likelihood of e-mailing parents, differed significantly by gender. Females reported a higher likelihood of using e-mail with parents than males (means of 3.6 and 3.0 respectively, $p \leq .03$).

Chi square tests were used to examine gender differences on the binomial e-mail, face-to-face and Web variables. No significant relationships between gender and reasons for contacting the instructor via e-mail were found when the total group of 142 respondents were counted. But among the 33 who gave at least one reason for contacting the instructor (and hence were more likely to have actually used e-mail to contact the instructor), males were more likely than females to "e-mail to ask a question about a quiz or test" ($\chi 2 = 5.5$, $p \leq .02$) while females were marginally more likely to check "other" as a reason for e-mailing the instructor ($\chi 2 = 3.0$, $p \leq .09$).

When asked why they did not e-mail the instructor, however, the total group of males and females differed significantly on one item: "I came to see him during office hours because I prefer face-to-face communication." Females were more likely to check this item ($\chi 2 = 7.8$, $p \leq .005$).

Males and females also differed significantly in their responses to "If you came to see the instructor during office hours, what was the purpose of the contact?" Of the 50 who checked at least one reason, 19 were male and 31 were female ($\chi 2 = 3.9$, $p \leq .05$). But among the specific reasons, only "other" indicated a significant difference. Females were more likely than males to check this item ($\chi 2 = 4.8$, $p \leq .03$). The chi-square tests revealed no other significance differences in the e-mail, face-to-face or Web related variables by gender (all p values $> .10$).

Age and year in school

The age and year-in-school variables were first tested for correlations with the various e-mail items for all 142 respondents. Age correlated positively (meaning older students were more likely to give a higher rating) with the "enjoyed contact with the instructor via e-mail" item ($r = .35$, $p \leq .001$), the "contact with the instructor via e-mail helped me learn" item ($r = .31$, $p \leq .008$), likelihood of using e-mail with professors ($r = .17$, $p \leq .05$), and likelihood of using e-mail with other academic contacts ($r = .20$, $p \leq .02$). The survey data also indicate a negative correlation between age and likelihood of e-mailing parents ($r = -.18$, $p \leq .07$).

Year in school, however, only correlated significantly with the "enjoyed contact with the instructor via e-mail" item ($r = .22$, $p \leq .05$) and not the e-mail learning item. The only significant relationship between year in school and likelihood of e-mail use with various communication partners was the negative correlation between year in school and likelihood of using e-mail with parents ($r = -.18$, $p \leq .03$).

Again, since there is discrepancy between the number of students who answered questions regarding e-mail and Web use and the number of students who actually e-mailed the instructor, additional correlations were calculated with only the limited number students who reported a reason for e-mailing the instructor ($n = 33$).

Among those who reported any reason for using e-mail to contact the instructor, age correlated positively and significantly with the e-mail-with-instructor enjoyment item ($r = .43$, $p \leq .02$) and the e-mail-with-instructor learning item ($r = .42$, $p \leq .03$). No significant relationships were found in this group between year in school and the other e-mail-related variables.

E-mail Correspondence Log

Appendix A summarizes actual e-mail contact between the instructor and students in Principles of Public Relations. The table includes the date of initial e-mail contact by the student, an ID number (notice that repeated ID numbers indicate repeated contact by that individual), gender, the information put in the RE: space by students and the primary purpose of the contact (with secondary purposes in parentheses) summarized by the instructor. It also includes notes if the discussion was concluded or the problem was resolved in another mode besides e-mail. The "messages in thread" column indicates the number of messages exchanged in that particular conversation (e.g., two messages indicates an initial contact and a single responses). (Also worth noting is that much of the e-mail correspondence took place after the survey was administered on December 8.)

DISCUSSION

When both e-mail and face-to-face contact are available and voluntary, why do (or why don't) students choose to contact the instructor via electronic mail? In many ways, student use of e-mail in this course was parallel to the use of face-to-face communication. The top reasons given for both seemed relatively unequivocal -- to ask questions about quizzes, tests or assignments -- as opposed to the rarely cited "To express my opinion's option. Reviewing actual e-mail correspondence reveals some typical examples of these unequivocal questions: "Will it [the test] still be on chapters 1-5 and notes taken in class?" and "Would you be able to send my score to my e-mail account?" In terms of frequency, the reasons

cited for e-mailing rank in the exact same order as reasons for visiting the instructor in person. (See Tables 2 and 4).

The "other" response (see Appendix B), however, was cited more often as a reason for face-to-face contact than for e-mail contact, and it is possible that more equivocal communication tasks are better classified as "other" than any of the options given. Also, the equivocality of the options listed can range widely within the items offered. For example, "To ask a question about a quiz or test" can range from unequivocal, "When is the test?" to highly equivocal, "I don't understand why I did so poorly on the test." At any rate, there is little evidence in this study to suggest that opportunities to contact the instructor via e-mail, when completely voluntary, encourage students to overcome inhibitions and fears any more than standard face-to-face opportunities.

Most students had access to e-mail, and a large majority of them did not use it to contact the instructor. The most common reason students cited for not using e-mail to contact the instructor was that they had no reason to e-mail him. However, 30 students reported that they simply preferred face-to-face communication.

The face-to-face data paralleled the e-mail data again in that most students reported not coming to visit the instructor in office hours because they had no reason to meet with him. Only seven said they preferred e-mail to face-to-face communication when asked why they did not visit the instructor in person.

Who are students most likely to choose as potential e-mail communication partners? The results of this study corroborate well with Elasmar and Carter's 1996 study where students reported a greater likelihood of using e-mail to communicate with friends and family than professors and coworkers. "Friends elsewhere" was the top choice in both studies.

Do students feel they learn from and/or enjoy contact with the instructor via e-mail? Responses to questions about learning from and enjoying e-mail contact with the instructor can best be characterized as neutral. However, the validity of the aggregate responses to

these questions is doubted since only 16 students had e-mailed the instructor at the time of the survey and more than 60 responded to each of these two questions.

Does gender affect the answers to the above questions? Females were more likely than males to predict using e-mail to contact parents. Females also were more likely to check "other" as a reason for contacting the instructor via e-mail, to prefer face-to-face communication to e-mail, to report at least one reason for visiting the instructor in person and to select "other" as a reason for visiting the instructor in person. Males were more likely to use e-mail to ask the instructor about a quizzes or tests. Although these findings suggest several gender differences in communication choices, they may be confounded by the fact that the instructor was a male. That is, the results may have been different if the instructor was a female. Nonetheless, the gender-related findings introduce ripe areas for future research.

Does age or year in school affect the answers to the above questions? Older students and students further along in school were less likely to use e-mail to contact their parents. But older students reported greater enjoyment of, and learning from, e-mail contact with the instructor. They also reported a greater likelihood of using e-mail to contact professors and other academic contacts. Perhaps older students viewed these contacts more as approachable peers than the younger students did. These findings contrast the assumption that younger students make better use of new technologies such as e-mail and the Web.

Other findings

A large discrepancy exists between the number of students who reported they had used e-mail contact with the instructor and those who actually had e-mailed the instructor at the time of the survey. Perhaps the self-reports are affected by a social desirability bias. Another possible explanation is that students generalized their experience contacting other instructors to the questions regarding contact with the instructor of this particular course. In any case, this discrepancy presents an issue for future research.

The frequency of e-mail contact with the instructor increased dramatically at the very end of the semester. Only 16 students used e-mail to contact the instructor during the entire semester

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leading up to the last exam before the final exam, but 13 different students used e-mail to contact the instructor in the weeks following the survey, which was given the class meeting before that last exam. A close look at the nature of the contact suggests that this increase was more due to the intensity of concern over grades than it was a function of awareness of e-mail as a communication option. The instructor's e-mail was made available in the syllabus from the first day of class. Also, informal observation showed that the frequency of phone calls and office visits increased after the last exam in a similar manner.

IMPLICATIONS

Although the sample of students who participated in this study limits the generalizability of the findings, the results of this study suggest several areas of concern for those who teach public relations or similar courses at the college level. The data also indicate some areas for future research on communication choices and new technologies in public relations and mass communication education.

E-mail provides students an additional means of communicating with their instructors. For the most part, students in this study seem to be using e-mail for the same reasons that they use more traditional modes of communicating with the instructor outside of class. For the instructor, however, this may mean spending more time responding to
e-mail in "virtual" office hours in addition to traditional office hours. But the voluntary nature of e-mail contact in this case kept the time spent answering e-mail to a reasonable level considering the class size of more than 200. Future studies may examine the relationship of time spent on e-mail correspondence relative to time spent in face-to-face conversations (e.g., Does an increase in one lead to a decrease in the other?).

The effects of age and gender on student e-mail also merit future investigation. Particularly interesting are the findings that many females preferred face-to-face communication to e-mail and that older students seemed to enjoy more benefits from e-mail than younger students. These

relationships should be examined more rigorously with different groups of students and different types of instructors.

The most appropriate questions in the areas of e-mail use in teaching mass communications are now much less a concern of access to or general adoption of the technologies as they are questions of the efficacy of these media to help teachers and students. Further systematic investigation of the phenomena and questions raised in this study is certainly a worthwhile endeavor.

Another area of study is what classroom instruction students have received at the high school level and college level in using e-mail -- not just the technical dimension of sending an e-mail but the issue of the legal issues involved in sending e-mails, e-mail etiquette and grammar and spelling guidelines for classroom (or workplace) e-mail use.

An important area of research is the e-mail use of high school media students. As 95% of high school publication classrooms had computers in 1998 (Communication: Journalism Education Today), students in publications classes are likely to use computers as part of the course. Are these computers connected with the Internet, and, if so, how are students and teachers using the Internet and e-mail in the teaching and learning process?

How is the use of new technology in high school media programs affecting the technology use of those students when they reach college classrooms? Are they more likely to use e-mail and other new technologies (such as surfing the Web for research material).

If a modern-day Jimmy Stewart would be using e-mail in his romantic quest and Hollywood's bloopers in e-mail use is the topic of publication (Ebiri, 1998), then teachers need to be incorporating the technology -- and instruction of this important communications tool -- into high school and college classrooms.

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APPENDIX A
E-mail Correspondence Log

Date of initial contact	*ID (male/ female)*	*Re:*	*Primary purpose*	*Notes*	*Msgs. in thread*
9/2	1 (M)	office hours	set appointment	followed up with face-to-face conversation	5
9/2	2 (M)	new student checking the site	comment on course Web site		2
9/4	3 (M)	class	ask about expectations for reading assignments		2
9/5	1 (M)	class conversation	comment on class discussion		2
9/16	4 (F)	PUR 3000	will miss exam (asked to take it early)	followed up with face-to-face conversation	2
9/17	5 (M)	test for PR class	missed class (asked what was missed and what to read)	referred to Web site/syllabus	2
9/19	3 (M)	Thanksgiving break	will miss class (asked for lecture notes)		2
9/19	1 (M)	another question	request for correct answer from recent exam (also asked when grades will be posted)		2
9/22	3 (M)	????????	challenge exam question		2
9/23	6 (M)	Scantron error?	can't find exam score on posting (requested it via e-mail)		2
9/25	7 (F)	TV show	mention TV show related to course discussion	Student turned in written thought paper on topic	1
10/1	1 (M)	Notes	offer grammatical correction for notes posted on Web		3
10/11	7 (F)	PUR 3000	what to study for exam (also asking to clarify concept discussed in class)		2
10/13	8 (M)	Friday's test	will miss exam(ask to take it early)		2
10/15	9 (M)	PUR 3000	will miss exam ask to take a make-up)		2
10/16	10 (F)	PUR 3000	ask to take exam early		2
10/23	7 (F)	class presentation	ask to make class presentation on forwarded e-mail received (also ask about points policy)	thread included forwarded message	3
11/10	11 (M)	Friday's test	will miss exam (ask to take it early)		2

11/12	12 (M)	nameless lady	asked name of Ph.D. student who conducted a study in class, wanted to ask her questions (also compliment on course Web site)		2
11/12	1 (M)	participation points	request grade progress information		2
11/12	13 (M)	student presentations and guests	request that key points from student and guest presentations be summed by instructor and/or posted on Web	rather lengthy e-mail conversation ensued regarding student presentations and class attendance	4
11/13	5 (M)	questions regarding test	request to clarify concepts not covered in book		2
11/16	7 (M)	for you next semester…	request to post exam grades on Web and URL for another course as example		3
11/17	1 (M)	test 3	will miss appointment		2
11/19	14 (M)	grades	request clarification of grading policy, curve		3
12/1	15 (M)	PUR test	request to take exam at later date		2
12/6	16 (F)	media buying	forward text document		1

Survey administered on December 8.

12/10	1 (M)	test 4	comments on test questions (also express appreciation for teaching)		2
12/12	17 (F)	test and final grades	request for grades		2
12/13	18 (M)	exam #4	missed exam, 'What can I do?"		2
12/13	16 (F)	grade change-graduating senior	reminder to fill out grade from for graduating senior "and what did I get on the last exam?"		4
12/13	19 (M)	test 4	request to review exam in person	finally met in person on 1/8	14
12/13	20 (F)	grade question	challenge test question		2
12/14	21 (M)	Re:	set meeting about grade	met in person	4
12/16	22 (M)	grade question	request change in grade policy		2
12/16	23 (M)	test grade and message	request grade and express appreciation for teaching		4

APPENDIX B
Selected Answers Written in Space Provided Under "Other" Option, Verbatim[6]

"Other" answers to **"If you have used e-mail to contact the instructor, what was the purpose of the contact?"**

- to notify the instructor of an emergency
- the night before an exam
- to get notes

"Other" answers to **"If you did not e-mail the instructor, why not?"**

- have met with you at the end of class and in your office
- I only had quick questions and they were easier to ask before class

"Other" answers to **"If you came to visit the instructor during office hours, what was the purpose of the contact?"**

- well – not during office hours, but after class
- about my grade
- prepare better for next test
- about doing class presentation
- review for exams
- to check on grades
- grade & credit points
- for personnel [personal] reasons
- to make sure I got extra points for being present on a particular day
- take an exam I missed for no credit and to ask about a grade
- to ask about my grade
- not during office hours, but after class
- to get advice on a PR career choice
- to talk about what a PR major (degree or experience) entails; how to integrate into the PR field

[6] Some are not recorded here because they simply repeat one of the checked answers to the question. Many respondents checked "other," but did not elaborate in the space provided.

"Other" answers to **"If you didn't come to see the instructor during office hours, why not?"**

- cause I usually spoke to him after class
- always available after class
- I usually just asked questions right after or before class if I needed to

"Other" answers to **"If you didn't visit the course Web site, why not?"**

- the Web site almost seems like a backup for people who didn't feel like coming, but still necessary
- did not see the need to
- I went to every class and took notes. I didn't find it necessary to go to course Web site.
- I came to all the lectures, so I didn't need to contact the Website
- I did not need to access the class site to get missed notes
- didn't have to use since I came to class
- I don't really know much about the Internet and how it works
- I chose not to – not interested
- I didn't miss class more than 2 times so I knew what was going on already
- too lazy
- don't usually do because I never miss class
- didn't need to
- not enough time in my day!
- I didn't have time
- no reason to